

REMARKS

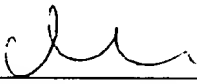
Upon entry of this amendment, claims 39 to 59 are pending. No new matter is introduced by this amendment. Support for the newly added claims may be found in the specification as originally filed and at least at pages 3-8, 10-12, and page 36.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that all claims are allowable as written and respectfully requests early favorable action by the Examiner. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation with Applicants' attorney would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is cordially invited to call the undersigned attorney of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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Marked-up Version of Claim Amendments

39. (Amended) A method for identifying a compound which [specifically] binds to the CCR5 chemokine receptor whose amino acid sequence is SEQ ID NO 5, [or a portion thereof, said portion comprising one or more of the glutamate at amino acid 100, the lysine at amino acid 138, the lysine at amino acid 141, and/or the valine at amino acid 209 of SEQ ID NO. 5] and which [specifically] binds at least one ligand of said CCR5 chemokine receptor, the method comprising the steps of

(a) providing a [transfecting a] cell containing [with] a nucleic acid molecule encoding said receptor or said portion thereof, and expressing said receptor or portion thereof;

(b) [expressing said receptor or portion thereof under conditions permitting specific binding of said compound to said receptor or portion thereof;]

[(c)] exposing said cell to a [sample suspected of comprising said] a candidate compound; and

[(d)] (c) detecting the presence of a[ny] compound [specifically] bound to said receptor or portion thereof, thereby determining whether said compound [specifically] binds to said receptor or portion thereof.

40. (Amended) The method according to claim 39, further comprising the steps of preparing a cell extract from the cell transfected with said nucleic acid molecule, isolating a membrane fraction of said cell extract, and contacting said [sample] candidate compound with said membrane fraction under conditions permitting binding of the compound to said fraction.

50. (Amended) The method according to claim 39, wherein said cell is exposed to said [sample suspected of comprising said] candidate compound, in the presence of a ligand for the CCR5 receptor.

52. (Amended) The method of claim 39, further comprising measuring the infectivity of the cell by HIV [, and wherein a compound is selected which decreases infectivity by HIV by at least two-fold].